1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

BELLS

778 These are the most sacred of the sacred objects of the Todas. It is necessary, however, to distinguish three kinds 177 of bells, the *mani*, the *tukulir mani*, and the *kwungg*, and it is 534 only the first of these which has any great sanctity.

The *tukulir mani* is only used in the *koòtiti* ceremony of the second funeral (p. 376), and between these occasions is kept by the Badagas or Kotas. I am doubtful whether it is a true Toda object, and suspect that it is a Badaga or Kota bell which is used in a ceremony borrowed by the Todas from one or other of these peoples.

The *kwungg* is the household bell and is kept in the hut. It is used in the funeral ceremonies on two occasions, being hung on the neck of one of the ordinary buffaloes before the animal is killed, and it is also the bell which is rung in the final scene of the *azaramkedr*. The bell may be touched or carried by women, and I have seen a *kwungg* removed from the neck of a slaughtered buffalo by a Kota who handed it to a woman. Though the bell is used in ceremonial, the fact that it may be touched by both Kotas and women shows clearly that it is not regarded as possessing any sanctity whatever. In general appearance, however, the *kwungg* probably differs little from the *mani*, being a large bell of the same oblong shape which is characteristic of cattle-bells.

778 The *mani* is a bell which, so far as I could ascertain, never 534 has a tongue, though this loss may be nothing more than a sign of its antiquity.

There are several kinds of *mani*. At the *ti* dairy there are two distinct varieties: the *mani* proper which is kept in the inner room and is hung on the neck of a chosen calf of the *persinir* on the occasion of the migration ceremonies, and the *kudrsmani* which is kept outside the door of the dairy. The latter appear to have little sanctity, but the former are probably the most sacred of Toda objects of veneration. They are said to be extremely ancient; some are reputed to have come from Amnòdr, and others are believed to have had miraculous origins, one having been born in a vessel of milk

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while the buffaloes were on their way from Amnòdr, while another came from the sea. The Todas believe that some of these bells are of gold, and one was reputed to be made of three metals—gold, silver, and iron. The bell born in milk is said to be of iron.

It seems probable that each of the more sacred herds at the village had at one time its own *mani*, and that a clan which possessed both *wursuli* and *kudrpali* would have had two bells of this kind or two sets of such bells.

At the present time, many of the clans have lost their sacred bells, and those which possess *mani* have only one or two of them. My most definite account for the Tartharol comes from Kars, where it is clear that the *wursuli* has two bells, the same as those reputed to have been hung on the neck of Enmon in the legend of Kwoto.[1] The *kudrpali* also had two bells which have now been lost, but the place where they used to hang still shares in the dairy ritual and is fed with milk just as the bells would have been if they had been there.

Since it is the *wursol* who takes the prominent part in the funeral ceremonies of a male, it seems also clear that the bells which are hung on the necks of the slaughtered buffaloes are those of the *wursuli*, but I did not definitely ascertain whether the bells of a *kudrpali* might not be used for this purpose, and indeed I am not altogether certain that any rigorous distinction is made between *wursuli mani* and *kudrpali mani*.

One striking distinction between the dairies of the Teivaliol and Tartharol was said to be the absence of *mani* among the former, except in the Piedr clan, and here there was something exceptional, for when this bell is used at a funeral it is hung on the neck of the buffalo by a Tarthar man belonging to Nòdrs. I was often told that, with this exception, the Teivaliol had no *mani*, and it was only towards the end of my visit that I became aware of the existence in the dairy of Kiudr of six bells called *mani*, two distinguished as *patatmani* and four as *ertatmani*.

[1] According to another account, these bells are kept at the *wursuli* of Nammòdr, and the *wursuli* of Kars has three *mani* in addition to these.

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778 534 Among the Tartharol there was no distinction of this kind, and it seemed that these bells were looked on by the Todas in a different light to other bells, and were not thought of when they told me that the Teivaliol had no *mani*. It was quite clear that they were not used at funerals. The suggestion which I have made in the chapter on the dairy ritual would provide an explanation of this apparently exceptional position of the Kiudr *mani*. If Kiudr is the relic of an old *ti* dairy and the bells are the old *mani* of the *ti*, it becomes clear why the bells have their exceptional character, and why they are not used at a funeral, for the bells of a *ti* would never be allowed to suffer the defilement to which this ceremonial use subjects them.

778 788 234 534 Most of the *mani* have milk, curds, or buttermilk offered to them during the dairy ceremonial. The only exceptions of which I heard were some of the bells of the *ti* dairy, the bell called Keu at the Nòdrs *ti*, and that called Pongg at the Pan *ti*, which are not 'fed,' to use the common Toda expression.

At the village dairy the 'feeding' is a regular part of the dairy ritual, curds being put on the bells in the earlier, and some of the milk from that first brought into the dairy, in the later part of the proceedings. I only heard of one instance in which bells were given buttermilk. This was done with the *ertatmani* of the Kiudr dairy, and if the supposition given above is correct, this should, therefore, also be the procedure with the *kudrs mani* of the *ti* dairy. It is quite possible that this is one of the details of the dairy ritual which escaped me, or it may be that it was a special custom of the *ti* dairy from which I suppose the Kiudr dairy to have been derived.

771 778 534 Some writers on the Todas have regarded the bells as the Toda gods, and there certainly is some evidence which would justify one in regarding them as idols. The 'feeding' is a definite indication that the bells are, to a certain extent, regarded by the Todas as living beings, and in the legendary accounts of the origin of certain bells, belief in their activity is obvious. One bell is born and another comes from the sea and sits on the side of a milking vessel. It is quite clear, however, that the bell belongs to a different category in the religion of the Todas from that occupied by the gods.

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Possibly the Todas may have some clear ideas about the connexion between their bells, gods, and dairies, but I could not discover them, and am inclined to believe that the people are now very hazy about the exact place of the bell and the god in their theology.

It was quite clear that they believed an offence against the dairy was punished by the gods, and I cannot say definitely that in this case the bell may not have been personified as a god, but I do not think that this was so.

It seems to me probable that the present sanctity of the bell has come about by a process of transference[1] from the buffalo to the object worn by it. Probably at one time the buffaloes were more directly venerated than they appear to be at present. There is evidence that even in recent times the bell-cow or buffalo which carried the bell was an object of especial veneration. In such books as those of Harkness and Marshall, the bell-cow seems to occupy a more prominent position than, so far as I could tell, it occupies at present.

In the present day the *mani* of the *ti* is only hung on the neck of a buffalo at the migration from one *ti mad* to another and at the Nòdrs *ti*, only for a few minutes even then. At the village dairy, the *mani* is never, so far as I could tell, put on the neck of a buffalo except at the funeral ceremonies. The idea in the latter case seems to be that a sacred buffalo should wear its bell, and in order that the buffalo slaughtered at a funeral should go to Amnòdr with its bell, the *mani* is hung on its neck while it is being killed. The legend of Kwoto and Punatvan shows that the bells are believed to travel to Amnòdr with the buffaloes.

The following may be suggested as a sketch of the probable evolution of the sanctity of the bell. At one time the buffaloes were the chief sacred objects of the Todas. Then this sanctity was concentrated in the persons of the bell-buffaloes, and later became partially attached to the bells, and the Todas then probably reached a stage in which it was doubtful how far the sanctity of the bell-buffalo was due to its position

[1] As we have already seen (p. 243) there is some reason to think that there has been example of such transference of sanctity to an object in the case of the *mn* or buried dairy vessel.

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as chief of the herd, and how far to the bell it carried. It is possible that this was the stage of evolution of the idea in which the earliest visitors to the Nilgiris found the Todas. We may suppose that gradually the sanctity became more and more attached to the bell, less and less to its possessor, until now the Todas seem to have reached a position in which the bell-buffalo has little or no sanctity above its fellows, and the sanctity resides almost wholly in the bell. The original use of the bell now only survives in the ritual accompanying the migration of the *ti* buffaloes and in the funeral ceremonies.

[192] There is one small fact which may perhaps be taken to indicate that the word *mani* is now applied to any object of a sacred or magical nature. The armlet put on the wrist of a child at the naming ceremony is called *kansutimani*. If the last part of this word is the same as the name of the bell, it would seem to indicate that the word may be used for an object the significance of which is magical rather than religious, and in connexion with a practice which has probably been borrowed.

Relics

The Todas have a few relics of heroes which are regarded as objects of veneration, and are kept in the dairies. One of these, which is believed to be the armlet of the Kars man who went with the *ti* buffaloes in the story of Kwoto, is kept at Kuzhu, and has milk put on it during the dairy ritual in the same way as if it were a bell.

Another object is the ring of Kwoten which was found on the sambhar skin after the disappearance of this god. I saw this ring, which is of silver and far more massive than the rings worn by the Todas at the present time. Breeks states that in his time the Todas also claimed to have had in their possession the spear of Kwoten.

The Buffalo and its Milk

In discussing the sanctity of the bells of the Toda dairies we have seen that there is some reason to think that these

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occasion, and Mr. Thurston[1] has recorded examples of several such compositions.

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Dancing takes place at the funeral ceremonies, and exhibitions of these or other dances are sometimes given by the Todas. The only dancing I saw was at a funeral and it was of the simplest possible description, the men who took part forming a circle and moving slowly round and round.

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The only musical instrument of the Todas is a simple flute, called the *buguri*. It is shown in Fig. 68, where it is being played by the man on the right. The instrument is not much used by the Todas and is not, so far as I know played on any ceremonial occasion. The music at the funeral ceremonies is always performed by Kotas.

[1] *Bull.* iv. p. 7.

" border. It is hung over the left shoulder, brought across the back, and forward 291
" under the right arm, the point being flung backwards over the left shoulder again,
" leaving the right arm at liberty, and allowing the folds to fall gracefully about the
" lower part of the person down to the knees." (*Plate* XI.)

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" The female dress (*Plate* IV.) on ordinary occasions consists of a robe similar
" to that of the men, though it is worn differently, being merely thrown over both
" shoulders and clasped in front by the hand."

Singularly massive ornaments are worn by the women (*Plate* V.)[1] A pair of brass 301
armlets worn on one arm above the elbow weighed 6 lbs.

The *Bûguri* (*Plate* XI.) is the only musical instrument they possess. It is a 534
hollow bamboo with holes like a flute, and a piece of horn or wood at the lower end.
The performer blows in at the top and produces a disagreeable sound, aggravated by the
fluttering of a piece of paper inserted between the bamboo and the horn. They are fond 633
of singing, that is, of chanting in a monotonous drone apparently without words. To a
European ear, however,—

" their song is death "
" And makes destruction plesse."

like that of the Sirens, but for a different reason. They dance in circles with clubs 595
(*Plate* XI.), holding hands or linking arms, and marking time with shouts of *Hoh, Hoh*.

They generally greet Europeans with a simple salaam; sometimes with a sort of 576
bow or military salute made in a courteous and dignified manner. A Toda woman 609
meeting a man salutes him by raising his feet one after the other to her forehead. An
old woman, however, receives instead of paying this reverence. A Badaga meeting a [illegible]
Toda lays his hand on the head of the latter. This, and the title *Mâv*, father-in-law,*
which is assigned to the Badagas, seems to imply some belief in the superiority of the
latter.

When Europeans came to the Hills under the auspices of Mr. Sullivan in 1820, *Tenure of land.*
to settle at Ootacamund and elsewhere, one of the first questions that arose, concerned 177
the nature and extent of the Toda rights in the soil.

The subject was discussed for years, during which no attempt was made by 421
Government to have these rights ascertained and defined. Ultimately, however, an 423
inquiry took place, which, amidst a mass of correspondence, elicited the following 651
noteworthy points:—

From as far back as our records extended, it appeared that the Todas had paid annually a light pasture tax for about 190 *Ballas*† of land, and 2 *Kantirâi fanams*‡ for each buffalo, and had enjoyed the right of pasturing their herds over

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* A Badaga house is sometimes called *Pâlthchi*, like the Todas' temples.
† A *Balla* = 4 acres nearly.
‡ *Kantirâi fanam* = 0r. 4a. 8p. of present money.

1 [Plate 5A -- Analyst]

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TODAS WITH CLUBS &c.

3(Breeks G-5 (no date) 1873 Toda

301 No. XXIX.—*Kévilth* (ಕೆವಿಳ್ತ್). Necklace made by Kotas. Worn generally by women; burnt with the body at funerals. 30 rupees.

No. XXX.—*Billvall* (ಬಿಳ್ವಳ್). Worn by women on the right wrist. Made by Malabar jewellers. Small silver beads rattle inside. Rupees 5, 8 annas.

No. XXXI.—*Thaggér* (ತಗ್ಗರ್). Brass chain worn by women round their waist next to the skin. Made at Kota village. Rupees 1, 4 annas.

No. XXXII.—*Mòdara* (ಮೋದರ). Silver ring worn by men and women on the small finger of either hand; a coin often forms the seal of the ring. Made by Tamil smiths. Rupees 3, 4 annas.

No. XXXIII.—*Pittah*. Worn by males and females on the third finger of the right hand, and made by Tamil smiths. Rupees 4, 8 annas.

372 No. XXXIV.—*Kealth* (ಕೆಳ್ತ್). Bamboo for blowing up fires. Made by Todas.

764 [3] No. XXXV.—*Puffi*. A square basket covered with cloth and cotton, and ornamented with cowries; at dry funeral for a female, 15 or 18 will be burnt, each containing a piece of jaggery, garlic, safron, sandalwood, and some nār (fibre) for sewing thread, the latter prepared by Toda women; the basket is made by the Kurumbas.

No. XXXVI.—*Kattkueith* (ಕಟ್ಕುಳ್ತ್). Burnt at the dry funeral of a female. Made by Kotas.

534 No. XXXVII.—*Buguri* (ಬುಗುರ). Musical instrument; a sort of flute. Made by the Todas, and played by them and by Badagas.